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FILE ONLY

Former NSA aide charged as spy

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WASHINGTON—

Ronald Pelton, a former communications specialist for the supersecret National Security Agency who was uncovered by Soviet defector Vitaly Yurchenko, was charged yesterday with spying for the Soviet Union.

The FBI said in an affidavit filed in Baltimore Federal Court that Pelton, 44, worked for NSA for 14 years until 1979 and had been "delivering defense information" to the Soviets.

Pelton, the first NSA employee accused of spying in 22 years, was arrested yesterday by FBI agents in Annapolis, Md.

The NSA, a Defense Department agency, has 100,000

employees worldwide, most of them servicemen, whose main job is to listen in on radio and telephone communications, both civilian and military. The agency, for example, is credited with forecasting the start of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war by tuning into uncoded company-level radio messages of front-line Egyptian troops as they moved toward the front.

The agency also seeks to decode Warsaw Pact and Third World diplomatic and military codes.

4th in 5 days

Yesterday's was the fourth espionage arrest by the FBI in five days, but officials said they were not related.

FBI officials said, though, that investigations of both the Pelton case and that of former CIA analyst Edward Lee Howard were begun be-

cause of a tip from Yurchenko, once in charge of Soviet KGB activities in North America.

Yurchenko defected to the U.S. last August with names of Americans allegedly working for the KGB. He redacted earlier this month, contending that he had been drugged by the CIA in a Virginia safe house and did not recall what, if anything, he told the FBI.

Pelton in recent years was a boat salesman.

Boating was also the love of another NSA employee, Jack Dunlap, who was charged with spying 22 years ago. Dunlap, an NSA chauffeur who had been photographing classified documents he was supposed to be delivering, joined the NSA boat club and raised suspicions about his wealth. He committed suicide in July 1963.